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NEWSFLASH

Everybody's talking about

Party repairs a peeve

POLITICAL parties say they are disappointed with the government's effort to repair the National Assembly.

The parties said it was disappointing that the government has not been able to come up with a clear plan to rebuild the affected structures since Parliament was set alight on January 2, 2022.

This resulted in the 2022 State of the Nation Address (Sona) being moved to Cape Town City Hall, a first in the history of South Africa's constitutional democracy.

In August, the new secretary to Parliament, Xolile George, said it would cost over R2 billion and take at least three years to restore Parliament to the way it was before the January fire.

Congress of the People spokesperson Dennis Bloem said: "The burning down of the Parliament building is a very painful matter.

"To make it worse is that there is absolutely no effort to rebuild the structure. We don't know why it took so long just to start with the rebuilding, totally unacceptable."

African Christian Democratic Party leader Kenneth Meshoe said: "We are all disappointed. I think it is only after criticism from Nehawu



REK SY BEK: Cope's Dennis Bloem upset.

that they managed to say we have made progress. But it appears like they are struggling to make up their minds on what they really want."

DA chief whip Siviwe Gwarube said the party's concern was that no concrete investigation, separate from the criminal justice process, had been done.

Asked what was delaying the rebuilding process, Department of Public Works spokesperson Zara Nicholson said questions should be referred to Parliament as the department submitted the report on the extent of repairs and estimated costs to Parliament.

Zandile Mafe was linked to the incident and arrested on the same day.

Mafe, who has been appearing at the Western Cape High Court, is due back *innie hof* on January 27.

